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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/601,333	06/16/2003	Stefan Trube	038724.52435US	6989
23911	7590	11/24/2004	EXAMINER	
CROWELL & MORING LLP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY GROUP P.O. BOX 14300 WASHINGTON, DC 20044-4300			LANGEL, WAYNE A	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		1754		

DATE MAILED: 11/24/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****Patent and Trademark Office**Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
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SERIAL NUMBER	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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EXAMINER

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED:

This is a communication from the examiner in charge of your application.
COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS

This application has been examined Responsive to communication filed on 10-7-04 This action is made final.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), 0 days from the date of this letter.
Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. 35 U.S.C. 133

Part I THE FOLLOWING ATTACHMENT(S) ARE PART OF THIS ACTION:

1. Notice of References Cited by Examiner, PTO-892.
2. Notice of Draftsman's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.
3. Notice of Art Cited by Applicant, PTO-1449.
4. Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152.
5. Information on How to Effect Drawing Changes, PTO-1474.
6.

Part II SUMMARY OF ACTION

1. Claims 1-19 are pending in the application.

Of the above, claims _____ are withdrawn from consideration.

2. Claims _____ have been cancelled.

3. Claims _____ are allowed.

4. Claims 1-19 are rejected.

5. Claims _____ are objected to.

6. Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

7. This application has been filed with informal drawings under 37 C.F.R. 1.85 which are acceptable for examination purposes.

8. Formal drawings are required in response to this Office action.

9. The corrected or substitute drawings have been received on _____. Under 37 C.F.R. 1.84 these drawings are acceptable; not acceptable (see explanation or Notice of Draftsman's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948).

10. The proposed additional or substitute sheet(s) of drawings, filed on _____, has (have) been approved by the examiner; disapproved by the examiner (see explanation).

11. The proposed drawing correction, filed _____, has been approved; disapproved (see explanation).

12. Acknowledgement is made of the claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. 119. The certified copy has been received not been received been filed in parent application, serial no. _____; filed on _____.

13. Since this application appears to be in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under Ex parte Quayle, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

14. Other

EXAMINER'S ACTION

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Horn Feja et al. Horn Feja et al. disclose a carrier gas which may comprise mixtures of carbon dioxide, argon, helium and nitrogen at column 7, lines 12-18. It would be prima facie obvious to employ such carrier gas with an amount of nitrogen of between about 4.5% and about 15% by volume, since it would be expected from column 7, lines 12-15 of Horn Feja et al. that any mixture of such gases with any concentrations would be suitable as the carrier gas.

Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aida et al. Aida et al. disclose a gaseous composition which comprises nitrogen, carbon dioxide and argon at column 1, lines 17-29. It would be prima facie obvious to provide a concentration of nitrogen of between about 4.5% and about 15% by volume in such gaseous mixture, since one of

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ordinary skill in the art would appreciate any amount of nitrogen would function in such mixture.

The non-statutory double patenting rejection, whether of the obviousness-type or non-obviousness-type, is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent. *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); and *In re Goodman*, 29 USPQ 2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(b) and (c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a non-statutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.78(d).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-19 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-19 of copending application Serial No. 10/461,873. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would be prima facie obvious to employ the nitrogen in an amount of between about 4.5% and about 15% by volume in the shielding gas recited in claims 1-19 of Serial No. 10/461,873.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

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Correia et al. is made of record for disclosing a gas mixture having by volume percent, about 0.5 to 4 carbon dioxide, about 0.2 to 1 hydrogen, and the balance argon and incidental impurities.

Tischler, Borne et al. and Fawer are made of record for disclosing various gaseous compositions which function as shielding gases for welding processes.

Cook et al. is made of record for disclosing at column 1, lines 5-9 that air contains small concentrations of helium and argon.

Lee is made of record for disclosing gaseous mixtures of nitrogen and argon.

Prasad et al. is made of record for disclosing a gaseous mixture which may include carbon dioxide, nitrogen and argon at column 3, lines 28-30.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Wayne A. Langel whose telephone number is (571) 272-1353. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stanley Silverman, can be reached on (571) 272-1358. The fax phone number for this

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Group is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either private PAIR or public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

WAL:cdc

November 23, 2004

Wayne A. Langel
WAYNE A. LANGEL
PRIMARY EXAMINER